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ABSTRACT

A study was devised to test usefulness of sociometric techniques and videotaping with retarded subjects. There were four levels of utilization of videotaping used in the project. Retarded children participated in all conditions, and one child was also allowed to view playback of himself from a testing session. Normal children were used in testing with photographs (with videotapes being used for storage and analysis) and also for video of games. General findings indicate that retarded children seemed to be less distracted by the videotape equipment, that there might be some therapeutic value in allowing retarded subjects view their own activities, and that there appears to be a direct correlation between results (for sociometric testing) of using photographs and video methods. (SH)

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Uses of Video Tape in Sociometric Testing at the North Hills Project

The North Hills Project started as a research endeavor to determine how well sociometric techniques could be used with retarded subjects. In an effort to add to the accuracy of collecting sociometric data, a decision was made to use video tape. What started as taping for storage on video tape of testing sessions added a new dimension to the project--questions and information were brought to light that would not have been exposed had video recordings been ommitted. The project staff decided to explore further uses of the video recorder in sociometric testing.

DEFINITIONS

The following operational definitions describe the levels of utilization of video taping used in the project.

Pictorial testing: Subjects make sociometric selections from individual photographs of classmates.

Pictorial testing: (with video taping). Video taping was used for proceedural analysis and storage of data.

Video testing: (monitor). Subjects sits outside classroom and makes sociometric selections while viewing classmates on the video monitor.

Video testing: (camera). Subjects within the same room viewed each other on the monitor, or were allowed to manipulate equipment. Subject makes sociometric selection by manipulation of camera equipment inside the room while monitor is viewed outside room by second interviewer.

EM 009 779

EQUIPMENT

The equipment used was made available by the Audio Visual Department of Arkansas College at Batesville. The equipment consisted of an Ampex VR 5100, a Shibaden TV Camera-fp 100, and a Shibaden 9" Video Monitor VM 905.

The steps of exploration of uses of video tape recording in sociometric testing were as follows:

1. Normal group - Pictorial testing
2. Normal group - Video of games
3. Retarded group - Pictorial testing
4. Retarded group - Pictorial testing with video taping
5. Retarded group - Video testing (monitor)
6. Retarded group - Video testing (camera)
7. Retarded child - Viewed playback of himself from day's testing.

GENERAL METHOD OF OPERATION FOR TESTING

Whether the equipment was placed adjacient to the testing area or in the testing area, no attempt was made to hide it. No stage directions were used at any time. There was only slight variations of operations made between sessions. Any subject showing interest or concern was allowed to look at and touch the equipment.

DISCUSSION

All of the material that is believed to be significant has not been analyized but there are some general findings that can be reported. Retarded children seemed to be less distracted by the video tape equipment.

There appeared to be some therapeutic value in allowing retarded subjects to view their own activities. The possibilities of therapeutic value was noted when a hyperactive subject was allowed to view portions of the tape on his own testing. The results of the session will be reported after

further analysis. After a preliminary viewing of tapes, there appears to be direct correlation between the results obtained from video and pictorial testing.

Video equipment can be used as an auxilary recording device or a source of visual stimulus (and warmup) for sociometric testing as the actual instrument of choosing in sociometric testing.

CONCLUSION

The value of video equipment in sociometric testing of retarded subjects has been established.

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